

Attendance Policy

In order to graduate from Prairie High School, a student must complete 46 credits. Completion of a course at Prairie High School will be defined as 60% mastery of the material and attendance to include not more than nine absences per semester. These attendance criteria are based on the theory that prompt and regular attendance in school is the beginning of dependability in adult business, personal, and social life. Furthermore, regular attendance is important, because valuable skills and information gained in the classroom may or may not show up on tests or be reflected in an academic grade. There is no substitute for regular attendance. It should be recognized that make-up work will not be as beneficial to the student as class attendance and participation in discussions and activities; therefore, every effort should be made not to miss classes. The general welfare of all students is best served by regular attendance.

1. Students must attend 90 percent of the class days in each course in order to receive credit for the course. A student will be allowed nine absences per class, per semester. Any absence beyond that number may mean a loss of credit in those subjects missed.
2. Parents/guardians must provide either a written note or a personal telephone call to the school office following any absence. Students are not to be admitted to class without an admission slip from the office. All admission slips shall be dated, written out, and signed in ink.
3. Students will be expected to make up the work missed regardless of the reason for an absence. Such work will be graded and shall become a part of the total grade for the grading period. It shall be the student's responsibility to obtain make-up assignments and complete them in a timely and appropriate manner as prescribed by the instructor.
4. The ONLY absences that WILL NOT be used in calculating the attendance record are:
 - A. Those that occur due to school-sponsored activities, since these are considered an equivalent educational experience. These exemptions will apply to students participating in sports events, cheerleading, music related events, FFA trips, academic field trips, and others deemed co-curricular.
 - B. Bereavement in the immediate family (grandmother, grandfather, father, mother, sister, brother). This includes attendance of funerals and related family needs. Bereavement is not to exceed 3 day. Any extended bereavement may be reviewed by the Attendance Board;
 - C. Subpoenas to appear in court or court-ordered, out-of-district placements for special services. Mandatory court appearances must be verified by the court clerk; and

- D. Illness or hospitalization verified by a doctor's or dentist's statement must be received within 1 week of receiving an attendance letter.
5. Excused absences include the following and count towards the allowable 9 absences:
- A. Emergency absences such as illness, serious illness, or other unforeseeable occurrences of a similar nature. Parents must notify the school by phone or note to explain the reason for such absences.
 - B. Pre-planned family activities: Parents must provide prior notice to the school for such absences, preferably at least one school week before the absence. When approved by the principal, the student shall then take a permission slip to each of his or her teachers and obtain homework assignments prior to the absence. The permission slip is to be returned to the principal after being signed by the teachers.

Pre-planned absences should be avoided during test week at the end of each semester, during scheduled standardized tests, or at other critical times when make-up opportunities may be lost or difficult to achieve.
 - C. Miscellaneous absences: The student's parents/guardians are to notify the school of these absences and the student should notify his or her teachers in the event of a planned absence for college day for seniors, a medical or dental appointment which could not be made outside of school hours, or other reasons judged acceptable by the principal
6. Absences not covered under any of the above criteria will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences shall include, but not be limited to truancy and temporary suspensions from school. A truant is defined as a student absent from school without authorization from the school or from their parents/guardians. However, the school does not necessarily have to excuse an absence allowed by the student's parent/guardian for a reason not normally acceptable to the school as a legitimate absence. No credit is given tests or assignments missed due to truancy. Truancies during the school year shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions:
- A. First Truancy: The school shall contact the student's parent/guardian. The student shall receive in or out of school suspension for one to three days. The student must make up any missed classroom work outside the regular school day.
 - B. Second Truancy: The school shall contact the student's parent/guardian. The student shall receive in or out of school suspension for one to three days or other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the school.
 - C. Third Truancy: The school shall contact the student's parent/guardian. The student shall receive in or out of school suspension for three to five days. The student may be suspended until a parent conference can be held.

- D. Fourth Truancy: The student shall be referred to the Board with a recommendation for expulsion.
7. After five absences and from school/class, a letter will be sent to the student's home, via email, indicating the school policy and the number of days missed. A similar letter will be sent following a student's ninth absence. Parents will be required to respond to the email notification. Failure to respond to the email notification could be reviewed by the attendance committee.
 8. After going over the 9th absence, the student will have credit withheld. That student, with parental/guardian accompaniment, must appear before the Attendance Board, consisting of the high school principal, the guidance counselor, and those teachers whose classes the student has exceeded the allowable number of absences. The parent/guardian has ten (10) school days from the date of notification to appeal the loss of credit or denial of promotion. If an appeal is made, it is the responsibility of the student/parents(guardians) to provide substantial documentation that: 1) Clears up unverified absences, unexcused absences or trancies. 2) Illustrates extenuating circumstances that led to excessive absences. 3) Defines health or legal issues preventing the student from attending school
 9. This Board will review the absence report to determine if the student will have credit withheld, which will occur unless extenuating circumstances surface.
 10. The Attendance Board can, after hearing a student's/parent's appeal for retention of credit, deny credit or put certain stipulations on a student whose credit will be dependent upon an agreement reached with the student and parents concerning attendance for the rest of the semester.
 11. Any decision to withhold credit can be appealed to the Superintendent and/or to the Board. If the appeal is rejected, one can assume the Board feels the absence could have been avoided.
 12. If the appeal is not granted, the student will remain in that particular class period for the remainder of the semester. If disciplinary problems occur in that subject, the student will be suspended from school.
 13. If the appeal is granted, the student will return to class with the Attendance Board's stipulations. If the stipulations are violated, a loss of credit will result.
 14. The Attendance Board may also decide to make decisions regarding the student's participation in extracurricular activities.

Policy History:

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